

AMERICAN CITIZENS SERVICES
American Citizens Services Newsletter

U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
April 2009

This periodic email newsletter is a service to U.S. citizens who live in or are travelling through the consular district of the U.S. Consulate General Melbourne, which comprises the States of Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and the Northern Territory. Through this American Citizens Services newsletter, the Consular Section highlights information pertaining to consular procedures, policies, and other topics of general interest to U.S. citizens who have registered with the American Citizens Services (ACS) Unit and provided an email address. If you believe others would benefit from receiving this newsletter, please forward it to them and encourage them to subscribe. To subscribe to our periodic newsletter and receive other updates, please register online by following this link:
<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/>.

If you do not wish to receive this periodic newsletter, or would like to be removed from our email list, please email us at MelbourneACS@state.gov.

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CONSULAR SECTION COMING TO ADELAIDE MAY 12

As announced via email and on our Web site, a consular officer and Passport and Citizenship Assistant will travel to Adelaide to provide routine American Citizen Services on May 12. U.S. citizens who wish to renew children's passports, apply for first-time adult passports, register children, and otherwise receive consular services that normally require U.S. citizens to appear in person at the Consulate should contact us at MelbourneACS@state.gov if they have not done so already to make an appointment. In your email include the type of service requested, the age of each applicant, a contact number and your location. Please register your interest as soon as possible to secure a place.

CONSULAR SECTION COMING TO HOBART MAY 19

As announced via email and on our Web site, a consular officer and Passport and Citizenship Assistant will travel to Hobart to provide routine American Citizen Services on May 19. U.S. citizens who wish to renew children's passports, apply for first-time adult passports, register children, and otherwise receive consular services that normally require U.S. citizens to appear in person at the Consulate should contact us at MelbourneACS@state.gov if they have not done so already to make an appointment. In your email include the type of service requested, the age of each applicant, a contact number and your location. Please register your interest as soon as possible to secure a place.

AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES, MELBOURNE — CHANGE OF PUBLIC HOURS

The American Citizens Services (ACS) section in Melbourne recently changed our public hours to better accommodate U.S. citizens seeking services after school hours and/or in the afternoons. Please note that these services are by appointment only; appointments must be made on line at <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov/consular/acs/appointments.html>. Exceptions to this rule include genuine emergencies, such as travel for a death in the family or for bushfire victims seeking replacement U.S. passports.

The current public hours for Melbourne ACS are as follows:

Counter Service hours (**by appointment only**)

- Monday: 9:00 am — 12:00 noon & 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm
- Tuesday: 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm
- Wednesday: 9:00 am — 12:00 noon & 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm
- Thursday: 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm
- Friday: 12:30 pm — 3:30 pm

Telephone Service hours

- Monday — Thursday: 9:00 am — 12:00

Please note that the Consulate General is closed on certain [U.S. and local holidays](#) and the first Wednesday of every month.

If you have any questions in relation to our new hours please direct them to MelbourneACS@state.gov.

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (IRS) FORMS ON LINE

Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax forms for preparing annual tax returns are available online at <http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>. Publication 4732, Federal Tax Information for U.S. Taxpayers Living Abroad, is also available on the Web at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4732.pdf>. IRS recently published a new guide for overseas taxpayers at <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/international/article/0,,id=97324,00.html>

Please note that the Consular Section cannot provide U.S. taxpayer assistance, specifically in preparing tax returns. We also do not stock or provide tax forms given that those are now available on line. Rather, all queries should be directed to the IRS using the information at www.irs.gov. For more information on US taxation, you may wish to consult the Mission Australia Web site at <http://sydney.usconsulate.gov/consular/acs/money/irs.html>.

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S AGENDA

Following his historic inauguration on January 20, 2009, President Obama and the new Administration updated the official White House Web site www.whitehouse.gov to include an "agenda" tab with key points on various issues. Additional information on current U.S. foreign policy is available through the Department of State Web site, www.state.gov, including recent speeches by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton. For specific details on U.S.-Australia relations, please consult the U.S. Mission Australia Web site at <http://sydney.usconsulate.gov/irc/us-oz/>.

BRING YOUR OWN PHOTOCOPIES OR PAY THE FEES

We wish to remind all of our American Citizen Services clients that as announced in our January newsletter and posted on the Mission Australia Consular Services Web site, photocopies as well as the original supporting documents have to be submitted with all applications for passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, Social Security Numbers and federal benefits. We can photocopy the documents for you; however, this service incurs a fee of US\$1.00 per page.

CONSULAR OUTREACH – COMING TO A CAPITAL NEAR YOU!!

The American Citizen Services Unit conducts periodic trips to Adelaide, Darwin, and Hobart to provide passport, registration, and other citizenship services that cannot be performed through the mail. We most recently conducted such visits to Adelaide in January and plan additional ones to [Adelaide May 12](#) and [Hobart May 19](#). Subject

to workload demand and funding, we tentatively plan visits to each capital at least twice in 2009. While we are committed to trying to provide this service on a regular basis, budgetary restrictions and other constraints may delay these visits. If you wish to register for notices of when a consular officer may be coming to one of these towns for consular outreach, please email us at MelbourneACS@state.gov. The visits are also advertised on our Web site, <http://usembassy-australia.state.gov>.

AVIAN INFLUENZA – BE PREPARED!

The Department of State remains concerned about the possibility that Avian Influenza may affect U.S. citizens overseas and provides extensive information on how U.S. citizens may prepare and protect themselves against the global disease. This includes an Avian Influenza Fact Sheet, http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1181.html. Additional information may be available at www.travel.state.gov.

ON-LINE APPOINTMENT SERVICE FOR AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

Effective November 5, 2007, all American Citizen Services require an appointment. The appointment system allows Americans requiring services to schedule their appointment times in advance, allowing for a greater flexibility of services and reduced waiting periods. Please book now for appointments over the next two months. Americans are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this new service by booking their appointment online from the relevant service page at Melbourne.usconsulate.state.gov. If your service does not require a personal appearance, you will be instructed on how to apply through the mail. For further details, please consult our Web site at <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov/consular/acs.html>.

AMERICAN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

For the reference of U.S. citizens in or traveling through Australia, and without endorsing or recommending any specific club or organizations, the U.S. Mission in Australia maintains a list of clubs and/or organizations relevant to U.S. citizens. That list is available at <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov/consular/americanorg.html>.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

The Department of State publishes Country Specific Information Sheets, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings for places throughout the world. For the most current information published by the Department of State, including World Wide Caution announcements, please go directly to www.travel.state.gov. To receive this information automatically, please register through the Internet-Based Registration System (IBRS) at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>.

USEFUL WEB SITES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The following Web sites and telephone numbers are provided for the reference of U.S. citizens, without endorsing or recommending any organization. The U.S. Consulate General does not accept responsibility for the contents of these sites nor the information provided by these offices.

* Domestic Violence (24 hours): 1-800-65-6463 (toll free)

- * Rape Counseling: <http://www.casa.org.au> in Melbourne, <http://www.yarrowplace.sa.gov.au/> in Adelaide, <http://www.sass.org.au/> in Tasmania, <http://www.rubygaea.org.au/> in Darwin.
- * For information on Australian visas: contact the Australian Department of Immigration & Multicultural Affairs (DIMIA) at www.immi.gov.au.
- * To obtain Australian birth/death/marriage certificates for all Australian states, visit www.bdm.nsw.gov.au.
- * For questions concerning U.S. customs rules and regulations, check out the U.S. Customs website at www.cbp.gov.
- * For information about taking your pet to the U.S., please consult the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) website at www.aphis.usda.gov. You should also contact directly the airline/shipping company you plan to use in order to make arrangements and any required reservations in advance.
- * Social Security Administration: For the latest in social security information, go to www.ssa.gov for news and announcements.
- * Veterans Administration: Obtain up-to-date information about entitlements to VA benefits at www.va.gov. For VA Education Benefits, go to www.gibill.va.gov.
- * Internal Revenue Service: For tax forms and other timely information, go to www.irs.gov.

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS AND CONSULATE CLOSURES

For a list of upcoming holidays and Consulate General closures, please consult our Web site at <http://usembassy-australia.state.gov/holidays.html>. The U.S. Embassy in Canberra has published the following schedule of public holidays and Consulate General closures in 2009:

Mission Australia Public Holidays for 2009			
Public Holiday	Country	Observed By	Date Observed
Good Friday	Australia	All posts	Friday, April 10, 2009
Easter Monday	Australia	All posts	Monday, April 13, 2009
Anzac Day	Australia	Canberra, Perth, Sydney only	Monday, April 27, 2009
Memorial Day	U.S.	All posts	Monday, May 25, 2009
Foundation Day	Australia	Perth only	Monday, June 1, 2009
Queen's Birthday	Australia	Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney only	Monday, June 8, 2009
Independence Day	U.S.	All posts	Friday, July 3, 2009
Labor Day	U.S.	All posts	Monday, September 7, 2009
Queen's Birthday	Australia	Perth only	Monday, September 28, 2009
Labor Day	Australia	Canberra, Sydney only	Monday, October 5, 2009

Columbus Day	U.S.	All posts	Monday, October 12, 2009
Melbourne Cup Day	Australia	Melbourne only	Tuesday, November 3, 2009
Family and Community Day	Australia	Canberra only	Tuesday, November 3, 2009
Veterans Day	U.S.	All posts	Wednesday, November 11, 2009
Thanksgiving Day	U.S.	All posts	Thursday, November 26, 2009
Christmas Day	U.S./Australia	All posts	Friday, December 25, 2009
Boxing Day	Australia	All posts	Monday, December 28, 2009
New Year's Day	U.S./Australia	All posts	Friday, January 1, 2010

This newsletter is published by the American Citizens Services Unit, U.S. Consulate General, Melbourne, e-mail: MelbourneACS@state.gov; website: <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov>. Effective November 5, 2007, all non-emergency services by online appointment only at <http://melbourne.usconsulate.gov/consular/acs/appointments.html>.